

LOUIS MATHIESON

> When I got to the machine shop I asked a sailor there if he would  
> lend me a pair of his pants. He answered no go get your own. That was  
> impossible. I was very scared but wouldn't let anybody know, my head I thought  
> would blow up it was buzzing so bad with fear. I thought I would try a couple  
> prayers but I didn't get a chance to say them as we were hit by two more  
> torpedoes. When the first one hit the deck under me went up about a foot and a  
> half and that sent me up about a foot and a half and when the second  
> torpedo hit it sent me tumbling on the deck. I didn't think I had time to say  
> another prayer, so in desperation I gave my life to GOD. The next thing I  
> knew my mind cleared up and I was able to make out forms around me, I could  
> see and I wasn't afraid any more. The officer in charge stood right in front  
> of me and he gave me orders, first, set the armored hatch which I tried to  
> do there were two or three other sailors went with me, but we had to give  
> up, the armour hatch was about three or four feet square and six inches  
> thick. then a man next to me said this enough for me and started to go by me on  
> his escape when the officer in charge said somebody stop that man. As he  
> was going right at me I directed him into a vertical drift press and he  
> went down. He was an officer an ensign. I didn't want to hit him as I  
> wanted to say the same thing only I wouldn't. Then a call came on our sound  
> powered phones, the Evaporator's wanted two men to help remove the valve  
> bonnets on the intake, so as to counter balance the ship to prevent capsizing.  
> Two men volunteered. then the man on our sound powered phones announced that  
> the word was abandon ship. The officer gave the word abandon ship. As I  
> was right in front of him I turned and ran up to the escape hatch and  
> tried to open it. But it wouldn't open so some other guy's came up and braced  
> them selves against the hatch until the door opened and water came out  
> all around the door. I said stop as we are under water. Every body went down  
> the ladder dejected. I wondered what can we do now. Then I remembered, when I  
> first came on board a sailor was taking me around the ship to learn where  
> the "A" division spaces were and we stopped by a hatch on deck and while  
> there I heard voices coming from down below, I asked where they were and  
> they answered the machine shop. Now I asked do you suppose that opening  
> up there would take us out of here. Some body said yes but that is a  
> condition Zed hatch and would be closed during battle. I said Bob your shorter  
> than I am get in my shoulders and I'll help you up. He said no you go. So I  
> did. As I started up I had great doubts about what was ahead, would there be a  
> fan or cross members to stop me would this shaft be bent in the middle  
> because of the Nine Torpedo's hit we had taken. There was just enough room in  
> this shaft to put my arms up over my head and my shoulders were right up against  
> the sides of the shaft. it was like a straight jacket. But I thought as  
> long as I would look up into the eye's of GOD I would be all right. When I  
> reached the top it took a few moments for my eye's to adjust to the light,  
> and I could see the water coming up the deck. Now in order to get out I had

> to some how turn around so that my legs could bend and I fell against the  
> side of the hatch which was about three or four feet up from the deck. I  
> stayed there and helped the rest of the men out. When the last sailor came  
> out I called and there was one man left, He was the assistant engineering  
> officer. I tried to get him out only Failed as he was too large for the  
> shaft. The ship started to roll over and I made a mad scramble up the side o  
> the ship as it was laying over and jumped into the super structure with the  
> ship coming down on top of me , I came up and found myself a short  
> distance away.

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> Well paul this it I hope it will do. Louie

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